minimum amount of non-food expenditure in order to meet the requirements of clothing, shelter, transport etc. The Planning Commission follows a uniform methodology for estimation of poverty across all the states. The present method used by the Planning Commission for estimation of proportion of people living below poverty line is based on the methodology recommended by the Expert Group on 'Estimation of Proportion and Number of Poor[1] (Lakdawala Committee). The Expert Group, which was constituted in September 1989, submitted its Report to the Planning Commission in July, 1993. A full Planning Commission meeting chaired by the Prime Minister in March, 1997 accepted the recommendations of the Expert Group with minor modifications. Since then the estimates of poverty at National and state level are being made using the Expert Group methodology.

(b) No Sir.

(c) In view of (b) above, the question does not arise.

Regulatory framework in the country

220. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:
SHRI HARISH RAWAT:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the steps taken by Government to ensure that the regulatory framework in the country is transparent, autonomous and professionally run;

(b) the status of the work done by the Planning Commission to prepare a policy paper on regulatory frame work for the infrastructure sector;

(c) the steps Government propose to undertake to ensure that appointments in such regulatory bodies are done through a transparent and fair procedure as appointments in autonomous regulatory authorities in the past have created controversies;

(d) whether Government are making rules, which ensures functional autonomy for the regulatory bodies; and

(e) in what manner Government would ensure effectiveness of Parliamentary oversight over regulatory authorities?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI M.V. RAJASEKHARAN): (a) to (e) Pursuant to the NCMP and the directions of the Prime Minister, Planning Commission is preparing a discussion paper for improving the regulatory regime to enable greater investment, particularly from the private sector, on a competitive basis. The proposed paper is being discussed with stakeholders and experts with a view to evolving consensus. Steps are also being taken to ensure that regulatory mechanisms in the country are transparent, autonomous and professionally run.

Gadgil Formula for transfer of funds to States

221. SHRI B.J. PANDA:
MS. PRAMILA BOHIDAR:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the Gadgil Formula for transfer of Plan funds to States has not been able to mitigate regional imbalances, especially of the backward cash-strapped States such as Orissa, Bihar, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh etc.;

(b) if so, whether Government propose to revise this formula to ensure better human and infrastructure development by way of better funding of deficient areas in the country; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI M.V. RAJASEKHARAN): (a) and (b) Consequent upon the formation of the new UPA Government, the Planning Commission initiated Regional Meetings with Chief Ministers of States under the Chairmanship of Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission covering the entire 6 (six) regions of the country *i.e.* North, South, East, West, Central and North-East. However, except Rajasthan, none of the States raised the issue of amendment of the existing formula of allocating Normal Central Assistance (NCA) to State Plans. In this context, the State of Rajasthan suggested that Gadgil Formula may be revised by giving weightage to the geographic area, index of infrastructure development and percentage of SC/ST population.

(c) Does not apply.